

A property west of the Blue Mountains. Greg and Diane K bought 500 acres of rural land idealistically thinking to establish a conservation property for wildlife. In their area three species of kangaroo exist. Little did they dream of the neighbourhood nightmare they would encounter, because they are non-conforming with the commercial 'harvesting' by the kangaroo industry that occurs along 3 kms of one side of their property, supported by neighbouring landholders.

"We have been exposed to commercial kangaroo 'harvesting' for seven years in rural New South Wales, Australia. We live amongst it. We quickly grew to understand why the kangaroo industry doesn't want you to know what really happens. We have watched with our own eyes, and it is inherently cruel.

"Kangaroos are pursued at night for hours by a noisy truck with a very bright light. They are shot at or are standing with others that are being shot, often in family groups. They run, all the while being tormented by the light and the loud gunshots, until the shooter comes across them again. They are shot at again, sometimes hit by a bullet, often in the head but not the brain. Or in the neck or the muzzle, then they run again until they are immobilized but not dead.

"The wounded kangaroo often has to wait for the shooter to shoot at other individuals until they come back to finish them off. We have heard them vocalise as the shooter approaches to deliver a final blow to the head. A plea for mercy perhaps?

"A solid shiny object is wielded into the kangaroo's head as she struggles. Joeys are often not killed with their mothers but ripped from her pouch and discarded into the bushes, not even counted as a statistical 'kill'.

"We hear them calling for their dead mothers until the sun comes up. We see them in the mornings lost and bewildered. We may see them again

the next evening, but usually never again after that. This is considered 'acceptable collateral damage'.

"We often see kangaroos shot on a previous evening who died on our property while escaping the terror of being continually hunted. We see the trails of blood where the kangaroo has had her throat cut. The body is hung on the back of the truck to bleed out. We see the butchering sites where the shooters stop to 'dress' the kangaroo. Cutting off heads, tails, legs and forearms before opening the torso to tip out the viscera. Joeys are often left lying amongst the remains of what was their mother, still smelling like their mother, until they die of exposure or predation. The scene is macabre.

"The group social structure is ruined. The mob is in disarray. The fields smell of death.

"Such an integral part of the biodiversity of the Australian rangelands—hunted down, killed and then butchered in a dirty, dusty truck bed. Squashed into pet food cans, or sold as sausage, or to manufacture soccer boots and gloves, or testicle key rings for tourists. It just doesn't add up.

We have seen hundreds of kangaroo's heads that have been butchered and left in the field. Many do not have a gunshot wound to them. The heads are cut off very low down the neck indicating that the kangaroo may have been miss shot, struck by a bullet in the neck or the torso.

We have witnessed kangaroo heads that have been shot in regions of the head other than the brain case, often in the front of the head who may not have died until sometime after, often showing the signs of gruesome secondary trauma from a length of metal pipe or an axe.

"The kangaroo is a gentle animal. The hunting is relentless, mostly brutal and often barbaric. We have lived it. It has to stop," they wrote. (2015)